

WUG Establishment and Development

1. Introduction

1. In Lao PDR, farmers living in the river plains largely rely on the irrigation systems. With increasing pressure on the national budget, the government has been allocating most of the available budget for construction of irrigation systems. Inadequate budget allocation for operation and maintenance (O&M) resulted in rapid deterioration of irrigation facilities. In order to solve the problem, the government adopted irrigation management transfer (IMT) policy, which aimed at full transfer of the assets and responsibility for O&M to the beneficiary farmers.

2. Irrigation Law (2012) adopts the term 'Water Users Group Association (WUGA)' and defines it as a farmers' organization that use water and benefit from the irrigation project (Article 46). The Irrigation Law stipulates rights and obligations of WUGA as following (Article 50).

- (1) Receive trainings on technical irrigation, plantation promotion activities, raising, forestry, management and fundamental agricultural land development;
- (2) Provide comments for overall interests of the irrigation project;
- (3) Participate and actively maintain, restore [and] repair irrigation project according to their responsibilities to ensure that water is supplied for the production;
- (4) Supply water for production areas according to the round depending on actual needs of each type of plant on a wide-spread and fair manner;
- (5) Carry out agricultural production according to land usage allocation plan in the irrigated areas;
- (6) Collect and summarize user's fees, electricity fee in full amount in order to transfer to the management and usage committee that is based at the project or project site;
- (7) Protect environment, tree plantation in the watershed areas;
- (8) Ensure peacefulness within the water user's group association;
- (9) Implement other rights and duties according to the laws and regulations.

3. NRI-AF Project will newly establish WUGs for each subproject and support capacity building of the WUG Executive Committee members. The activities of WUG establishment and development are conducted similarly for all WUGs of the subprojects. Though the activities, the project aims that each WUG will be able to perform proper O&M after IMT.

2. Implementation Procedure and Schedule

4. The component of WUG establishment and development are implemented by the following 7 steps of procedure.

- (1) 1st Village Consultation – Explanation 7 steps of WUG development
- (2) SIA Survey – Collect information and data on potential command area and WUG members
- (3) Gender Awareness Campaign
- (4) Workshop for WUG EC election including making 3R (role, rule and regulation), registration of WUG members (total 3 days per WUG)
- (5) Orientation meeting – Explanation of WUG regulation including role of each WUG EC member
- (6) Capacity Building of WUG EC members – (1) Administration, (2) Financial Management, and (3) O&M
- (7) (After 1 year or 2 crop seasons) Irrigation Management Transfer from PAFO/DAFO to WUG

3. Progress to date

5. Overall progress of the WUG establishment and development activities is summarized in the table below.

Step	Activities	Schedule (actual implementation/plan)				Responsibility
		Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV	
1	1 st Village Consultation – Explanation 7 steps of WUG development	Feb. 2015	May 2017	Jul.- Aug. 2018	Jul.- Aug. 2019	GIC CD Team PPO/DCO
2	SIA Survey – Collect information and data on potential command area and WUG members	Mar. 2015	Aug.- Sep. 2017	Oct.- Nov. 2018	Feb - Mar. 2020	GIC CD Team PPO/DCO Local Consultant Company
3	Gender Awareness Campaign	Aug.- Oct. 2018	Aug.- Oct. 2018	Oct.-Nov. 2019	Jun. – Aug. 2020	GIC CD Team PPO/DCO
4	Orientation meeting – Explanation of WUG regulation including role of each WUG EC member	Nov. 2018	Jun. 2019	Oct.-Nov. 2020	Sep. – Nov. 2021	GIC CD Team PPO/DCO
5	Establishment of WUG: Workshop for WUG EC election including making 3R (role, rule and regulation), registration of WUG members (total 3 days per WUG)	Dec. 2017- Jan. 2018 (Workshop) Feb.-Mar. 2018 (approval from District Governor)	Jul.-Aug. 2019	Oct.-Nov. 2020	Sep. – Nov. 2021	GIC CD Team PPO/DCO
6	Capacity Building of WUG EC members – (1) Administration, (2) Financial Management, and (3) O&M	Nov. 2018	Nov. 2019 – Mar. 2020	Jan.-Mar. 2021	May-Jun. 2022	GIC CD Team/ Engineering Team PPO/DCO
7	Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT) from PAFO/DAFO to WUG (3 years after completion of construction works)	Sep 2021	Jul – Sep. 2022	Jun. 2023	Jun. 2024	PAFO/PPO & DAFO/DCO GIC Engineering Team

Note: Blue-color-marked cells are plan while green-color-marked ones are implemented items.

6. **WUG EC establishment:** All 22 subproject (84 WUGs) under NRI-AF WUG-EC have been established and official approved by district governors. The WUG covering of 90 sub-schemes benefit for 162 village, with direct benefit 9,407 HHs (9,152ha command area). There are 455 WUG-EC members (151 females or 33%) appointed to be WUG-EC member. Detail see Appendix 6.2

7. **Straitening of Capacity building for WUG EC:** Up to date, O&M trainings for WUG EC with the topic on (1) administration of WUG, (2) financial management, (3) O&M of irrigation systems have been conducted to all 22 subprojects under NRI-AF. Total participant on the training is 1,736 person which is 34% (592 persons) were female. Below is show the date and number farmer participated on the training

	Phase I	Date	Total participant	Female	%
1	Nam Oun (Houn, ODX)	22-11-18	26	7	27%
2	Nambeng				
	Houay Lor	23-11-18	29	7	24%
	Nam Beng	26-11-18	27	7	26%
	Sub-total Phase 1		82	21	26%

	Phase I	Date	Total participant	Female	%
	Phase II				
1	Nam Hao	30-03-20	71	18	25%
2	Nam Tong	22-25/3/2020	50	20	40%
3	Nam Ngene 2	26-28/3/2020	22	8	36%
4	Houay Xo 2	26-05-22	59	20	34%
5	Houay Bong	09-08-22	75	35	47%
6	Nam Sa (Long, LNT) (Phase II)	(1) 20 – 21 Jan 21	19	6	32%
		(2) 23 – 24 Jan 21	22	6	27%
7	Nam Lue – Nam Chang (LNT, LNT) (Phase II)	(1) 27 – 28 Jan 21	26	8	31%
		(2) 29 Jan 2021	26	9	35%
		(3) 31 Jan – 1 Feb 21	23	7	30%
	Sub-total Phase 2		393	137	35%
	Phase III				
1	Dong Nouak (Nyot Ou, PSL)	1 – 4 March 2021	37	13	35%
2	Nam Hoy – Nam Lou (Boun Neua, PSL)	6-10/3/2021	57	31	54%
3	Nam Ngaad (Houn, ODX)	25 – 26 Jan 2021	51	13	25%
4	Namkha (Nam Haad-Houay Lieng)	18-05-22	26	6	23%
	Namkha	01-05-19	280	120	43%
	Nam Kha (Pha Oudom, BKO)	12 – 23 Jan 2021	157	55	35%
5	Nam Satone (Houaixay, BKO)	8 – 17 Feb 2021	120	36	30%
6	Nam Gna 2 (Sing, LNT)	5 – 6 Mar 2021	43	14	33%
7	Nam Ma (Long, LNT)	(1) 24 – 25 Feb 21	34	12	35%
		(2) 26 – 27 Feb 21	17	6	35%
		(3) 28 Feb – 1 Mar 21	19	8	42%
		(4) 2 – 3 Mar 21	20	7	35%
	Sub-total Phase 3		861	321	37%
	Phase IV				
17	Nam Ngay-Nam Boun	15-17/2/2022	40	18	45%
6	Houay Lap – Nam Ngai	19-26/2/22	74	23	36%
19	Nam Gna 1&3	7-11/6/2022	146	34	23%
20	Namtha 3	05-08-22	36	11	31%
21	Namtin 2	04-10-22	32	7	22%
22	Houay Sat 2	15-01-21	72	20	28%
	Sub-total Phase 4		400	113	28%
GRAND TOTAL			1,736	592	34%

Source: PPO/DCO

8. **Training for PPOs and DCOs staff for Irrigation transfer:** Training on IMT to the relevant PPO and DCO staffs on 16 and 17 Sep 2021 in Beng district of ODX Province, on 4 Sep 2021 in Bounneua District of PSL Province, and on 12 Sep 2021 in Houayxay District of BKO Province. Total participants were 110 persons, of which, 34 (31%) were females. Training in LNT Province was canceled due to the COVID-19 related lockdown in the province.

9. **Irrigation O&M Transferring (IMTs):** By December 2022m only 2 subprojects (Nam Beng and Nam Oun subprojects of Phase I) were completed and transfer organization conducted on 17 and 27 September 2021 respectively.

10. For Phase 2 (4 subprojects) and phase 3 (6 subprojects) expect to transfer to WUG in Q1/2023; for the remaining 3 subproject of phase II, 1 subproject of phase III and 6 subprojects of phase IV that under construction is planned for transfer to WUGs Q2/2023 before project closing scheduled for 30 June 2023.